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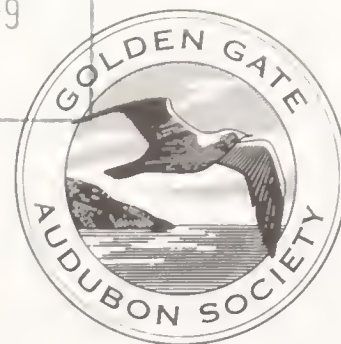
CALIFORNIA
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THE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY



FOUNDED 1917



Cal EPA

GGA board president Diane Ross-Leech and Eco-Oakland/Eco-Richmond program manager Anthony DeCicco accept the governor's environmental leadership award from the U.S. EPA's Linda Adams (center), and (left to right) state officials Mike Chrisman, A.G. Kawamura, Dale Bonner, and Scott Harvey.

GGA Wins Governor's Leadership Award

Golden Gate Audubon's pioneering Eco-Oakland and Eco-Richmond environmental education programs received a significant statewide honor with a 2008 Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award. A congratulatory letter to GGA executive director Elizabeth Murdock, signed by Linda S. Adams, Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the secretaries of four other California state agencies, noted, "All nominations received this year underwent very extensive screening, review, and evaluation process. Your particular nomination was deemed exceptional for its breadth, environmental and economic impact and value to California's environment and economy."

GGA's award category was Children's Environmental Education, described as "unique and exemplary educational programs and curricula that align with California's academic content standards and raise children's awareness of, and involvement in, environmental issues."

Anthony DeCicco, Eco-Oakland and Eco-Richmond program manager, and Diane Ross-Leech, GGA board president, accepted the award at a formal recognition ceremony attended by numerous state officials in Sacramento in late November.

GOVERNOR'S AWARD continued on page 12

Altamont Mediation Update

In November 2008, Golden Gate Audubon terminated its year-long legal mediation with the Altamont Pass wind companies and Alameda County over the companies' failure to comply with key terms of the settlement agreement that now governs three of the companies' operations at one of the world's largest wind farms. We secured some additional measures to protect raptors at Altamont Pass and to ensure ongoing compliance with the settlement agreement. But significant work lies ahead, and the companies still need to take more aggressive measures in order to reduce raptor mortality as required by the settlement agreement and County permits.

The settlement agreement that Golden Gate Audubon negotiated following our 2005 lawsuit over thousands of annual illegal bird kills committed the companies to reducing raptor mortality by half by November 2009 and to creating a comprehensive, long-term conservation plan for Altamont's birds. In Fall 2007, however, Golden Gate Audubon learned that the companies had failed to implement some key terms of the settlement agreement—including failing to remove some of the highest-risk turbines for raptors—and subsequently filed legal mediation documents (see March 2008 *Gull*).

The companies' compliance to date has been based entirely on company reporting, with no

ALTAMONT MEDIATION UPDATE continued on page 12



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ROSTER

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Membership is \$25 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets six times per year (schedule can be obtained from the main office).

The Gull is published nine times per year. Special third-class postage paid in Oakland, CA. Send address changes to office promptly. The post office does not forward The Gull.

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Nature Store hours: Monday – Friday, 9 – 12, 1 – 5

Design and layout e.g. communications

Change of Leadership at Golden Gate Audubon

A new year often brings change and new opportunities, and 2009 is no different for our organization. At our September board meeting, I announced I would be leaving Golden Gate Audubon on January 9, 2009. While it was a very difficult decision, I am ready to take on new challenges as I launch my wildlife conservation consulting business and eager to spend more time with my two-year-old daughter. The board has initiated an executive search and anticipates filling the executive director position in early 2009.

It has been an incredible honor to work with Golden Gate Audubon, and I am very proud of all we have accomplished together. Since I joined the staff in 2003, we have worked together to build Golden Gate Audubon into one of the most effective wildlife conservation organizations in the Bay Area. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of our board, staff and volunteers, we have significantly strengthened our conservation programs, expanding them to include new restoration programs and ambitious, precedent-setting policy initiatives. We have greatly increased our adult birding and educational programs to serve hundreds of community members each year. We have strengthened our award-winning Eco-Oakland education program for underserved youth and their families and have begun to extend it into new communities, beginning with North Richmond. We have built a successful volunteer program and increased our member and volunteer bases by over five fold.

Today, Golden Gate Audubon is financially sound and growing strategically. Our board and staff have worked diligently over the past several years to transform the way we support our critical work, and our results have created a strong base for continued program growth. And we have an incredibly talented, passionate and effective team of staff and board members to carry out our mission for years to come.

It has been a great honor to work with our board and staff. I have learned so much from their expertise and dedication. I also continue to be inspired by the extraordinary leadership, talent, and generosity of our many volunteers and supporters, who give so generously of themselves to support our work to protect local birds and their habitats.

I believe in the critical importance of Golden Gate Audubon's work, not only as Executive Director, but also as a resident of the Bay Area. I have always loved birds and have worked in wildlife conservation for over 10 years, but my work with Golden Gate Audubon has opened my eyes to the importance of the wildlife haven we call home. From the myriad shorebirds roosting at the Emeryville Crescent on my evening commute to the sharp-shinned hawk that graces my backyard to the run-down waterfront area we have transformed into a vibrant wetland, I see all around me the rich biodiversity of San Francisco Bay and striking examples of how Golden Gate Audubon's commitment can ensure that our wildlife and wild places endure for generations to come.

I thank all of you for the opportunity to serve as your Executive Director over these past years. I look forward to seeing Golden Gate Audubon continue its vital work—and to joining you on birding trips and restoration activities around the bay.

—Elizabeth Murdock



Introducing Mike Lynes

Golden Gate Audubon welcomes Mike Lynes as Conservation Director, effective December 1. Prior to joining GGA, Mike worked for many years as a biologist with PRBO Conservation Science, followed by a career as an environmental and public interest attorney. Watch for a profile of Mike in March.



CONSERVATION CORNER



Eddie Bartley

Wind farm and wetlands in Taiwan

GGA GOES TO TAIWAN

When you think of Taiwan, perhaps you think of the former Chiang Kai-shek and now of high tech, but you should also think of birds. Golden Gate Audubon was invited to make a presentation on a global warming topic at the 2008 Taipei International Bird Watching Fair, hosted by the Wild Bird Society of Taipei on November 8-9, 2008. The society is a non-government organization of people who share common interests in bird-watching and the conservation of wild birds and their habitats. The Wild Bird Society of Japan and the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines, Bird Life South Africa, and the Nature Society of Singapore made other presentations at the fair.

Eddie Bartley introduced Noreen Weeden, who presented "Greening Wind Power: Balancing Birds and Wind," in which lessons learned at Altamont Pass were shared with the audience. Taiwan has a population of over 22.5 million people and is investing in green energy. It currently has over 100 wind turbines operating on its west coast; by 2010 it plans to obtain 10 percent of its energy from wind power. Golden Gate Audubon supports development of wind energy as a means of reducing the effects of global warming; however, wind farms must be properly sited

based on science and biological surveys.

The bird watching fair was held in Guandu Nature Park—the first nature park in Taipei and a designated Important Bird Area—where many of the park's recorded 229 species of birds can be viewed from trails, bird blinds, or an observation deck overlooking a wetland. Taiwan has a huge number of wildlife species, including 80 mammals, 500 birds, 80 reptiles, 35 amphibians, 224 freshwater fishes, and 400 butterflies. Around 500 bird species have been recorded in Taiwan, of which 150 are residents.

—Noreen Weeden



Alpine Accipitor

Eddie Bartley

ON THE WATERFRONT

Even at freeway speeds, large white dots

(Great Egrets) are easily spotted in Hoffman Marsh, a narrow wetland that parallels I-580 in South Richmond. At a slower pace, birders along the adjacent Bay Trail can sometimes see Clapper Rails, Long-billed Curlews, and many others. Golden Gate Audubon is worried about a proposed project (see December Gull) that would replace two warehouses, which draw little traffic and don't generate litter, with a department store, and later, a restaurant or other business. We're concerned about the effects of lights from the parking lot; rats and feral cats that will be attracted to restaurant trash; noise and air pollution from cars; and other potential impacts. An Environmental Impact Report should be done to determine the severity of these impacts, so we are disappointed by the Richmond Planning Commission's recent decision not to require one. The decision is being appealed to the Richmond City Council; please write and encourage them to require an EIR.

—Phil Price

BERKELEY/ALBANY FERRY TERMINAL

The draft Environmental Impact Report has been completed for a proposed passenger ferry service, with a terminal in Berkeley or Albany. The EIR confirms Audubon's fears about two of the four possible terminal sites: putting the terminal at the end of Gilman Street or Buchanan Street would require a great deal of dredging, would require longer (and thus more polluting) ferry runs, and would require the ferries to navigate through significant numbers of rafting birds in the aquatic portion of Eastshore State Park. Golden Gate Audubon believes that these sites will no longer be seriously considered. The two remaining sites are both in Berkeley: in the marina, or at the parking lot of His Lordship's restaurant. We are currently considering the information in the EIR to determine a position on these sites. In general, Golden Gate Audubon prefers that sites near the Bay remain as undeveloped as possible, both to avoid boat wake

CONSERVATION CORNER continued on page 4

impacts and to allow maximum habitat restoration in the future.

—Phil Price

CESAR CHAVEZ PARK

Della Dash, a volunteer with the East Bay Conservation Committee, has worked energetically with the City of Berkeley, the Eastshore State Park, and others to come up with a plan to help protect Burrowing Owls and other wildlife at Cesar Chavez Park. Berkeley recently agreed to allow GGA to put up signs, and is willing to consider adding seasonal fencing to protect the burrows.

—Phil Price

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AND EVENTS

Join the Conservation Committee on your side of the Bay to find out about their local projects. The East Bay Conservation Committee meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in different locations. The San Francisco Conservation Committee meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Randall Museum.

Saturday, January 10, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Pier 94. As part of our on-going efforts to restore wetlands along San Francisco's southern waterfront, we'll work to weed out the invasive *Salsola soda* from our wetland and beach areas. Come join us! Refreshments provided.

Sundays, January 11 and February 8, 9 a.m. to noon

Join our TogetherGreen Volunteer Days at the Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge workday, and help us prepare habitat for California Least Terns. Meet at the main refuge gate at the northwest corner of former Alameda Naval Air Station, Alameda.

Monday, January 19, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with the East Bay Regional Park District and other Bay Area groups cleaning up and restoring the shoreline named after him. Enter the park from Swan Way and follow the road to the end parking lot. Then look for the wooden observation platform that is adjacent to Arrowhead Marsh.



Red-necked Grebe

Bob Lewis

Saturday, January 24 and February 28, 9 a.m. to noon

Save the Quail habitat restoration workday at Harding Park. Meet at the parking lot at the corner of Sunset Blvd. and Lake Merced Blvd.

Saturday, February 7, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Pier 94. Monitor the native and non-native plants of Pier 94. Never done it before? Not to worry, we are looking for plant people and recorders alike. Refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP to Jennifer Robinson if you are planning to attend.

For more information on any of these activities or events, or for directions to any of the sites, please contact Jennifer Robinson, Golden Gate Audubon's Volunteer Coordinator, at jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org.

Hats Off to Whitney Dotson and Measure WW Victory

Congratulations to Golden Gate Audubon Board member Whitney Dotson for his election to the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) Board of Directors. Whitney will represent the EBRPD's Ward 1, encompassing Richmond, San Pablo, Albany, El Cerrito, El Sobrante, Kensington, Berkeley, Emeryville, and parts of Oakland and Pinole. Whitney has been a GGA board member since October 2007. "This is an opportunity to pull together my last 15 years of work," he notes.

Everyone who treasures East Bay regional parks is also celebrating the over-two-thirds Yes vote for Measure WW, the \$500 million bond measure to further improve the parks. (See *The Gull*, Oct. 2008 or visit www.ebparks.org, for more information on what Measure WW will accomplish).

Golden Gate Audubon Sponsors Bird Rescue Training

January 31, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

GGA office, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G

Wildlife Emergency Response I

This comprehensive 8-hour class explores the fundamentals of wildlife rescue from the phone to the field, covering laws and regulations, disaster response, human and animal safety, capture strategies, restraint techniques, first aid, and public relations. Slides and video enhance the learning experience, and students will have the chance to practice capture techniques with equipment during hands-on exercises. While participants are provided direction on proper handling of wildlife, completion of the class will not exempt them from regulations that govern possession of oiled or non-oiled native wildlife.

Class Fee \$40.00. Pre-Registration Required. To register, visit www.ibrrc.org, call 831.869.6241 or email rebecca@ibrrc.org.

Wildlife Response
Training and Recruitment Campaign





SPEAKER SERIES

SARAH REED, COORDINATOR

Talks in the Speaker Series begin at 7:30 p.m.

Iceland: Birds, People, and Conservation in a Land of Glaciers, Geysers, Volcanos, and Splendid Isolation

Bill Lidicker

Berkeley: Thursday, January 15

Iceland is a fascinating island ecosystem in the North Atlantic. Its biota is partly Eurasian and partly North American. It is also a major stopover for birds migrating between breeding grounds in Greenland and northern Canada and wintering areas in Europe. Interdisciplinary approaches to conservation are increasingly viewed as essential for success, and Iceland is a wonderful example of where this network of influences comes into clear focus.

Bill Lidicker, Professor of Integrative Biology and Curator of Mammals, Emeritus, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, UC Berkeley, will briefly outline the human history of the island, beginning in the year 874, in the context of Iceland's geology and climate. He will give an overview of Icelandic fauna and flora, with an emphasis on the birds (only 10% of which are passerines). Finally, he will summarize conservation efforts, covering such diverse issues as forestry in an almost treeless land, the codfish wars, the Great Auk, whales, introduced species, and more.

Penguins and Albatrosses: The World Through the Eyes of a Seabird

Ted Cheeseman

San Francisco: Thursday, February 19

Join naturalist and expedition leader Ted Cheeseman for a lecture exploring what it is like to be a seabird in the vast unforgiving desert of the open ocean. How is it that an albatross can fly 14,000 miles on a single feeding trip to bring home just one meal for a chick? How can penguins survive, thrive, and raise chicks in the world's harshest environments but not populate the mild tropics? Illustrated with images from his travels around the world with Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris, Ted will tell stories of the new views we are able to have into the lives of seabirds through GPS-telemetry. We are only now learning how truly magnificent penguins and albatrosses are just as many species face sharp declines from industrial fishing and climate change.

Ted Cheeseman's love of penguins and albatrosses stems from a lifetime of guiding travelers to remote seabird breeding colonies. After completing a master's degree in tropical conservation biology at Duke University, Ted returned to California to lead and organize expeditions full-time with Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris. On his voyages to Antarctica Ted has witnessed the decline of his favorite of all birds, the Wandering Albatross, inspiring him to become involved with conservation efforts to protect these magnificent birds.



Gentoo Penguin

Ted Cheeseman

Berkeley: Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin).
Directions: www.northbrae.org/directions.htm

San Francisco: To be announced; contact GGA office.

Secure Your Legacy

You have worked hard and long to achieve success and build wealth for you and your family. Now, your focus is likely to start shifting to preserving your wealth for your family and philanthropic causes.

Please join Golden Gate Audubon members for one of our free upcoming estate planning seminars, Secure Your Legacy, which will provide information on the various types of planning tools at your disposal to help preserve, protect, and transfer your wealth to your family or other beneficiaries. Susan Consey, Morgan Stanley Vice-President and long-time member of Golden Gate Audubon, will provide information to help meet your philanthropic goals. Reservations required. Please reserve your spot by contacting Linda Coffee at 510.843.2222.

Tuesday, February 3

Quintana Oakland
Morgan Stanley Office
One Kendall Square, Suite 920
Oakland, CA 94612

Thursday, February 5

Quintana San Francisco
Morgan Stanley Office
101 California Street, 3rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111

Program begins at 7 p.m.

Giving Opportunity: Charitable IRA Rollover

Congress has re-authorized legislation that allows individuals 70-1/2 years or older to make cash gifts totaling up to \$100,000 (during the 2009 tax year) from traditional or Roth IRAs to qualified charities without incurring income tax on the withdrawal. Please note that transfers must be made directly to the charity by the plan trustee. To obtain transfer instructions please contact Linda Coffee, Development Manager, at 510.843.7295.



FIELD TRIPS

PAM BELCHAMBER, COORDINATOR

\$ Entrance fee

 Biking trip

For questions about individual field trips, contact the leaders. If you cannot reach a leader, contact Pam Belchamber at 510.549.2839. Field trips are also listed on the Golden Gate Audubon website at www.goldengateaudubon.org.

Jewel Lake in Tilden

Berkeley

Fridays, January 2 and February 6,
8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Phila Rogers, 510.848.9156, philajane6@yahoo.com

On the first Friday of the month the Jewell Lake walk will meet at the parking lot at the north end of Central Park Dr. for a one-mile, two-hour-plus stroll through this lush riparian area. We will be seeing a variety of winter residents and, on the lake, wintering waterfowl such as Bufflehead, Common Merganser, and probably Ring-necked Duck. Heavy rain cancels.

Birding for Everyone

San Francisco Botanical Garden at
Strybing Arboretum

Saturday, January 3, and Saturday,
February 7, 10 a.m. – noon

Angie Geiger and Nancy DeStefanis,
SF Nature Education, Darin Dawson, SF
Botanical Garden Docent, 415.387.9160;
www.sfnature.org

Meet for this monthly trip at the kiosk/bookstore at front gate of Botanical Garden, Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way. Families welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Co-sponsored by Botanical Garden, San Francisco Nature Education, and Golden Gate Audubon Society.

Heron's Head Park

San Francisco, near Pier 96

Saturdays—January 3, February 7, and
March 7, 10 a.m. – noon

(Tours at 10 a.m., and every 30 minutes,
last departure at 11:30 a.m.)

Nancy DeStefanis, Executive Director
of San Francisco Nature Education.
415.387.9160, nancy@sfnature.org

Join Lowell High School interns, for a
SF Nature Education and Golden Gate
Audubon sponsored tour of this little-

known site near Pier 94 at Hunter's Point
in San Francisco. Come and experience
the wonder of observing and learning
about waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading
birds that call Heron's Head Park home
in the winter. Interns lead tours and are
equipped with spotting scopes. Heron's
Head Park is located at Jennings and
Cargo Streets, two blocks south of Pier
96. Rain cancels.

San Francisco Botanical Gardens

Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

Sunday, January 4, and Sunday,
February 8, 8 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Alan Ridley, allanrid@pacbell.net; Helen
McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall,
650.349.3780

Meet at 8 a.m. at the front gate of the
Botanical Garden at Ninth Avenue at Lin-
coln Way. This delightful section of Golden
Gate Park has several micro-habitats that
attract an array of resident, migrant, and
vagrant birds. This regular monthly trip is
oriented toward beginning birders.

Coyote Hills East Bay Regional Park

Fremont

Sunday, January 11, 9 a.m. – noon

Anne Hoff, anne2210b@sbcglobal.net,
925.229.4908

Winter is a great time for raptors and
waterfowl at Coyote Hills. Depending
on the rainfall, we may have freshwater
ponds beckoning shorebirds, rails, teal,
and geese. The adjacent wooded areas
offer sparrows, thrushes, and many other
passerines. We'll bird until noon and
maybe beyond, so bring a lunch if you
want to stay.

Meet at the Visitor's Center parking lot at 9:00 a.m.
Heavy rain cancels. Self-pay envelopes want \$5.00 or
join East Bay Regional Parks District ahead of time
and get an annual parking pass. Coyote Hills is at the



Yellow-billed Loon

Bob Lewis

west end of Patterson Ranch Road/Commerce Drive
in Fremont. From I-880, take Highway 84 west, exit
at Paseo Padre Parkway, turn right, and drive north
about one mile. Turn left on Patterson Ranch Road.
This is the park's entrance road which will take you to
the picnic areas and visitor center. Parking fees may
apply. \$

Martin Luther King, Jr. Shoreline

Arrowhead Marsh, Oakland

Monday, January 12, 10 a.m. – noon

Bob Lewis, bob@wingbeats.org

Join Bob Lewis at Arrowhead Marsh at
the MLK Shoreline, noted for Clapper
Rails, and a number of other skulking spe-
cies. This particular day, the tide will be
high, and we should see rails, raptors, and
ducks.

Take Hwy 880 towards the Oakland Airport. Exit at
Hegenberger Road, going West. Turn right on Doo-
little, and right on Swan Way. Turn left into the MLK
Shoreline Regional Park, and continue to the end of
the road. Meet at the last parking lot at 8:30 a.m.

Berkeley Fishing Pier

Thursday, January 15, 8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

Emilie Strauss, 510.540.8749,

Meet at the Western Terminus of Uni-
versity Avenue in Berkeley for a leisurely
half mile walk (one way) down the Berke-
ley fishing pier in search of Surf Scoters,
scaup, grebes, and gulls. With luck we
may see a Long-tailed Duck or Black Sco-
ter. Dress warmly. Bring a scope if you
have one. Rain cancels.

Corona Heights

San Francisco

Friday, January 16 and Friday, February 20, 8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

Charles Hibbard; Dominik Mosur; Brian Fitch; Margaret Goodale, mgoodale@randallmuseum.org, 415.554.9600x16.

Meet in front of Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, at end of Museum Way off Roosevelt. We will enjoy views of the city and bay as we circle Corona Heights, checking east canyon woodland and north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitoring hilltop scrub and south cliff.

Las Gallinas Salt Ponds

San Rafael, Marin County

Monday, January 26, 9:30 a.m. – noon

Pamela Llewellyn, 510.316.8932, seacreature219@sbcglobal.net

Las Gallinas, a reclaimed wetland areas, offers a large variety of bird species.

Take 101 North to Lucas Valley Rd./Smith Ranch Rd. exit. Take Smith Ranch Rd ¾ mile, cross railroad tracks and turn left (just before McInnes Park entrance). The Las Gallinas sanitation plant is on the right, and near the plant you will see a sign pointing to the ponds. Meet at the parking lot at the end of the road.

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park

Oakland

Wednesday, January 28, and

Wednesday, February 25, 9:30 a.m.

– noon

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066, hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey, 510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net

Join us at the large spherical cage near the Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue. We will bird around there, then go up the garden path toward Children's Fairyland or walk down the lake toward Embarcadero, after which we will cover what we missed. In January, the returning migrants should be out in force. The park is in the peak of the winter season, and everyone should have arrived. In February there may be some Cormorants nesting. Come see Lake Merritt at its best!

Take 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins, and walk into park on Perkins. Best parking at boathouse lot near spherical cage. Entry (via Bellevue near Children's Fairyland) is free on weekdays.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Shoreline

Arrowhead Marsh, Oakland

Sunday, February 8, 9:30 a.m. – noon

Pamela Llewellyn, 510.316.8932, seacreature219@sbcglobal.net

Spend a Sunday morning at Arrowhead Marsh at the MLK Shoreline, noted for Clapper Rails and a number of other skulking species. We should see rails, raptors, and ducks.

Take Hwy 880 towards the Oakland Airport. Exit at Hegenberger Road, going West. Turn right on Doolittle, and right on Swan Way. Turn left into the MLK Shoreline Regional Park, and continue to the end of the road. Meet at the last parking lot at 9:30 a.m.

Sacramento River-Delta

Antioch Marina, Antioch

Saturday, February 14, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Pamela Llewellyn, 510.316.8932, seacreature219@sbcglobal.net

Join GGAS for a Valentine's Day cruise. The trip aboard the comfortable M/V Delphinus, will be a wonderful day of exploring the rich habitat and meandering channels of the Sacramento Delta. We will search for thousands of Tundra Swan, Snow Goose, White-fronted Goose, Canada Goose, and a myriad of ducks. We will be on the lookout for over-wintering and resident raptors, including the Great Horned Owl. Bring lunch, liquids, and warm clothing. Trip is limited to 30 participants, and cost is \$80 for GGAS members. Non members pay \$90. To reserve space and make payment, contact Kristen Bunting, office manager by Friday, January 23rd, at 510.843.2222, or ggas@goldengateaudubon.org.

To get to the Antioch marina, take Highway 80 to Highway 4/Hercules exit. Go east on Highway 4, heading towards Stockton, to the "L Street/Contra Loma exit in Antioch. Turn Left on "L", at bottom of the ramp, drive straight to Marina parking lot.

Honey Lake and Greater Sage-Grouse

Lassen County

Saturday and Sunday, March 14 – 15

Dave Quady, 510.704.9353, davequady@att.net

We will search Lassen County for Greater Sage-Grouse, Bald Eagles, and other wintering birds of the Eastern Sierra.

Trip is limited to the first 20 participants who sign up with the leader beginning at noon, January 26. Detailed directions will be provided to those who are confirmed on the trip. Lodging is available in Susanville; primitive camping is available in the Honey Lake State Wildlife Area. Plan to bring warm clothing, lunches for both days, and a scope if you have one. Carpooling encouraged.

Yosemite's Bird Life

Yosemite National Park

Friday-Sunday, May 29 – 31

Dave Quady, 510.704.9353, davequady@att.net

The lower and middle elevations of Yosemite National Park are alive with singing birds in late May/early June. A variety of habitats supports a rich diversity of bird life. This trip is limited to the first 20 participants who sign up with the leader; reservations open at noon on February 23. Past participants have found it convenient to camp at Hodgdon Meadow in the park (reservations necessary; campground fills up fast), or to stay in campgrounds or commercial lodgings near the park's Big Oak Flat entrance. Detailed information, including meeting times and locations as well as lodging suggestions, will be provided to those who are confirmed on the trip. Carpooling encouraged.

Confirmed participants should bring warm clothes, rainwear, and rubber boots for wet meadows. Bring lunches for Saturday and Sunday and be prepared to walk about three miles each day. Leaders: Dave Quady and Dave Cornman.

FIELD TRIPS continued on page 8



Bald Eagle

Tom Grey

Bicycle Trips

Kathy Jarrett, leader

510.547.1233 (call for cell number; no calls after 9 p.m.), Kathy_Jarrett@yahoo.com

Bicycle helmet required. Bring lunch and liquids. Rain cancels.

BART schedules: www.transitinfo.org

East Bay Regional Parks

Arrowhead Marsh/Martin Luther King Jr. Oakland, Alameda County

Saturday, January 10, 9:50 a.m.

Bicycle from Fruitvale BART 9:30 train to East Creek Point Trailhead by 9:50. We'll ride the S.F. Bay Trail from East Creek Point to Damon Marsh and Arrowhead Marsh. Bring snacks/lunch and liquids, and dress in layers. Bicycle helmet required. All levels of birders and bicyclists welcome. Heavy rain cancels. Leaders will ride from Fruitvale BART to the trailhead. No reservations necessary but email or phone call appreciated. Allow time to get your BART ticket processed and your bicycle to the platform.

Directions by car: Exit I-880 at High St. in Oakland and go SW to the High St. Bridge to Alameda. Cross bridge and turn left onto Fernside and park on street. Bike back over bridge, turn right onto Tide-water Ave. and go 0.25 mi. to the East Creek Point trailhead on the right. Lesser St. is just beyond on the left. To reach Arrowhead Marsh by car: From I-880 in Oakland, exit at Hegenberger Road and head west. Turn right onto Doolittle Drive (Hwy. 61) and right again onto Swan Way, then first left into the park (look for small EBRPD sign on left); continue to end of drive to parking lot.

Alameda Creek/Coyote Hills

Fremont and Union City

Start Fremont at 9 a.m. or Union City at 8:15 a.m.

Saturday, January 31

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Isherwood Staging Area in Fremont or 8:15 a.m. at Union City BART. Those of us arriving on BART will use Decoto Rd and the trail to go to Isherwood. Approximately 20 miles total, all on bike trail, very little uphill. We will bike along the Alameda Creek Regional Trail to Coyote Hills Regional Park, returning to Isherwood in the afternoon. Dress for cool, windy weather. Bicycle helmet

required. Bring lunch and liquids. Rain cancels.

Directions: By car, take I-880 to Fremont and take the Alvarado Blvd/Fremont Blvd exit; go east on Fremont Blvd. In about 0.5 mi, turn left onto Paseo Padre Parkway, which then crosses Decoto Rd in about 1 mi. and shortly thereafter parallels Alameda Creek; 0.8 mi after Decoto Rd, turn left onto Isherwood Dr, cross the bridge, and then immediately right into the Isherwood Staging Area. If coming from the peninsula via the Dumbarton Bridge, continue east on Hwy 84, which becomes Decoto Rd after crossing I-880, and 1 mile past I-880, turn right onto Paseo Padre Parkway and follow above directions. AAA's Fremont-Union City map is recommended.

East Shore State Park and Aquatic Park

Alameda and Contra Costa Counties
Emeryville to Richmond on the SF Bay Trail

Saturday, February 7, 8:30 a.m.

Kathy Jarrett, 510-547-1233, kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Aquatic Park (southernmost pond) at Bay and Potter Sts. in Berkeley. Rain cancels. Reservations not necessary but an e-mail or phone call would be appreciated. High tide approx 9:15 a.m. We will bird most of Eastshore State Park (ESSP) from Emeryville to Richmond. Bring bicycle lock, sunscreen, lunch, and liquids. (Food and drink may be purchased at Amini's store/café at Richmond Marina Bay. Coffee, other beverages, soup and sandwiches are also available at the Sit & Stay Cafe in the Mud Puppy's building at Point Isabel Regional Shoreline and at the Sea Breeze Market at University Ave. on the trail.) Bicycle helmet required. All levels of birders and bicyclists welcome. Rain cancels.

Websites: BART train schedules: <http://www.transitinfo.org>, SF Bay Trail: <http://baytrail.abag.ca.gov/>, Eastshore State Park: www.eastshorepark.org, Berkeley bicycle boulevards: <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/ContentDisplay.aspx?id=6650>

Driving directions: From San Pablo Ave in Berkeley just south of Ashby Ave, turn west toward the bay on 67th St, then right on Bay St (the extension of Shellmound St. in Emeryville) just past the train tracks and go straight to the end, past Potter St., to a small parking lot on the right. Bicycle back to the first pond. Watch out for busy traffic here, as cars are going toward the freeway from Bay and Potter. Bicycling directions: Ashby and North Berkeley BART stations are recommended. Access to Aquatic Park from Addison St., Bancroft Way, Bay St., or Bicycle-Pedestrian bridge from SF Bay Trail south of

University Ave.

East Shore State Park

Richmond to Emeryville on the SF Bay Trail

Saturday, February 21, 8:30 a.m.

Kathy Jarrett, 510.547.1233, kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the El Cerrito Del Norte BART Station or 9 a.m. at the end of S. 51st Street in Richmond. There is a spur from the SF Bay Trail to this point. BART not on holiday schedule. High tide approx. 9:15 a.m. We will bird along the SF Bay Trail from Richmond to Emeryville and end at Aquatic Park in Berkeley. Bring bicycle lock, sunscreen, and liquids. Bring lunch or purchase at the Seabreeze Market on University Ave. in Berkeley. Bicycle helmet required. Bring lunch and liquids. Rain cancels. All levels of birders and bicyclists welcome. Reservations not necessary but an e-mail or phone call would be appreciated.

Driving directions: Take the Bayview exit from I-580 N and turn left to cross west over the freeway. Go left on Seaport and immediately left on S. 51st Street; go to end and park on street. Entrance to short spur to the SF Bay Trail starts here. If you are concerned about security, park at Point Isabel and ride north on the trail about ¾ mile to meet the group.

BART/Bicycle directions: Meet Kathy and Blair at the Del Norte BART station at 8:30 a.m. and ride to the trail. From BART take Ohlone Greenway Trail south to Potrero Ave., turn right toward the Bay, cross San Pablo Ave. and left onto S. 55th St immediately after crossing under I-80, then right onto Gately, first left onto Ellis, right onto Bayview. Cross Carlson, then go over I-580, left onto Seaport and immediately left onto S. 51st St. and proceed to the trail. Ask for directions from the El Cerrito Plaza Station to the trailhead via Carlson. View BART schedules online at <http://www.transitinfo.org>, Bay Trail info online at <http://baytrail.abag.ca.gov/> East Shore State Park: www.eastshorepark.org

Thank You

Many thanks to Bob Lewis, Tom Grey, Lee Karney, Eddie Bartley, Glen Tepke, and the other photographers who generously donate photographs to *The Gull*. Please contact the editor (lowensvi@sbcglobal.net) if you are interested in having your photos published in *The Gull*.



CLASSES

Golden Gate Audubon is sponsoring the following 2 classes through the Albany Adult School, 601 San Gabriel Avenue, Albany. Register online at <http://albany.k12.ca.us/adult/> or call 510.559.6580 for more information.

Birding Basics

Eddie Bartley, eddie@naturetrip.com (www.naturetrip.com)

Four Tuesday evenings – January 6-27, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Four Sunday field trips following classes – 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Start out the new year with a fun and fascinating nature study in a supportive environment. Colorful presentations are designed for beginning birders, and cover use of equipment, ID techniques, behavior, evolutionary adaptations, and birding hot spots.

Birding By Ear—Winter Session

Denise Wight

Four Thursday evenings, February 26 – March 19, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Four Saturday field trips, February 28 – March 21, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Birds communicate by making a variety of sounds all year long, even in the middle of winter. This class will focus on bird sounds heard at this time of year in our area. We will learn to locate and identify birds by chips and calls as well as the songs of some species that are now starting to sing. For more information, email blkittiwake@yahoo.com

Wild Birds of San Francisco

Eddie Bartley, eddie@naturetrip.com (www.naturetrip.com)

Two Thursday evening lectures, January 22 and 29

Three Saturday field trips, January 17, 24, and 31

San Francisco Botanical Garden's County Fair Building: The first meeting will be at the main entrance to the Botanical Garden at 9 a.m. on January 17.

Join a fun and enthusiastic group in an introduction to many of the amazing birds that inhabit the San Francisco Bay Area in winter, and discover their local habitats. Presentations include colorful bird imagery, information on optics and field guides, identification techniques, and more. \$50 fee.

North American Owls

Dave Quady

Oakland Museum of California

Three evening lectures February 17, 18, 24; 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Three weekend evening field trips, dates to be defined.

Seldom seen but often heard, owls hold a fascination for most of us. Learn what makes an owl different from other birds, how to identify them by sight and sound, and understand more about their habits and habitats. Classes will be illustrated with slides, and with the sounds of these birds of the night. On field trips, we

will attempt to hear and see some of the species discussed. \$75 fee. Check with the GGA office to see if space remains.

Zen and the Art of Mushroom Hunting

Debbie Vies

Golden Gate Audubon office, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G

One Thursday evening class, February 12, 7:30 – 9 p.m.

One field trip, February 15; 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.; location TBA

Discover the world of mushrooms with an experienced and engaging guide. The workshop consists of an evening slide lecture, including hands-on material, and a day in the field at a premier mushrooming location. \$35 fee.

Spring Birding Classes in San Francisco

Evening bird classes taught by Joe Morlan and endorsed by Golden Gate Audubon Society start February 3, 4, and 5, 2009. All classes meet 7-9:15 p.m. in room 307 at Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay St. Free parking is in the school lot off Bay St. on the east side of the building.

The instructor is co-author of *"Birds of San Francisco and the Bay Area"* and *"Birds of Northern California."* He is also coordinator of the recorded "Northern California Birdbox" sponsored by Golden Gate Audubon Society. Slides illustrate all lectures, and the text for all classes is *"A Field Guide to Birds of North America,"* fifth edition, by the National Geographic Society. *"The Sibley Guide to Birds"* is recommended as an adjunct text for Ornithology II & III.

Field Ornithology I meets on Tuesdays. Introduction to birds and birding, combining basic field skills with the study of bird ecology, biology, evolution, and behavior. Part A (EA101) starts February 3 and ends March 17; Part B (EA105) starts March 24 and ends May 19 (no class March 31)

Field Ornithology II meets on Wednesdays. Continuing in-depth study of the identification and status of North American land birds, including pigeons, parrots, cuckoos, and owls. Part A (EA110) starts February 4 and ends March 18; Part B (EA115) starts March 25 and ends May 13.

Field Ornithology III meets on Thursdays. Continuing study of North American birds including orioles, finches, geese, and swans. Part A (EA120) starts February 5 and ends March 19; Part B (EA125) starts March 26 and ends May 14.

The instructor may arrange optional field trips on weekends. Please bring binoculars and field guides to class if you have them. Fees are \$140 for each seven-week course with a \$10 discount if you pre-register at least a week early. Pre-registration is strongly advised. For further information call 415.561.1860. To enroll, please register online at: <https://www.evolvewww.com/ce.ccsf/>.

Remembering Janice Delfino

Janice Delfino, a long time leader of conservation efforts in the Bay Area and a staunch supporter of Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, passed away in June of this year. But her legacy of environmental activism will be with us for years to come.

Janice began her environmental work in the 1960s, focusing on the East Bay shoreline and wetlands. She supported the formation of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (SFBNWR) in the early 1970s. She was a founding member of the Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge in 1986, which is responsible for expansion of the SFBNWR. Projects Janice worked on are too numerous to list here, but Robert's Landing in San Leandro and the Hayward Shoreline were particularly important to her. She knew details about the waterfront there better than anyone. Ironically, she also was known for helping new regulatory staff become familiar with their own agency's regulations.

Janice had an ability to find details that could challenge projects destined to harm wildlife habitat. She knew her facts and was always prepared with maps and references in hand to prove her points. This made her a formidable advocate for shoreline habitats. Those of us fortunate enough to have worked with her learned some important lessons: how to be very careful, studious, reliable, tenacious, courteous, strong, generous, and loving.

In January 1997, Janice and Frank Delfino attended a meeting of Golden Gate Audubon's newly formed Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge (FAWR) committee. They became devoted to the Alameda dream, which is remarkable since they lived in Castro Valley, their primary interests were south of Alameda, and they belonged to Ohlone Audubon. Janice brought to FAWR her knowledge of environmental law and her ability to read through heavy bureaucratic documents to find critical information. She would often report to us on dredging proposals or other projects that could put California Least Terns or pelicans at risk.



Janice Delfino

Janice was a direct descendant of Jose Maria Soberanes, a soldier who traveled with Gaspar de Portola and was with the Portola party when it climbed the summit of what is now called Sweeney Ridge to see San Francisco Bay, its first sighting by Euro-

peans. The beauty and wonder that this scouting team experienced is something Janice felt compelled to protect. Her heritage, love of nature, and her understanding of nature's important role in our lives motivated her work.

On Nov. 22, 2008, a beautiful bench designed by Linda Patterson was unveiled and dedicated to Janice's legacy at a special ceremony in her honor at the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge. The bench sits on the hill near the visitor center at the refuge. It directly faces Sweeney Ridge to the northwest and offers a wonderful view of the Bay that Janice helped protect. It also offers a place to rest and reflect on the history of San Francisco Bay and its future. Because of Janice, we are all much richer.

—Leora Feeney, Chair, FAWR Committee

Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

PERPETRATING FUND (\$500 TO \$999)
Regina Phelps

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Michael J. Caplan, Lisa Caronna-Perley, Christine S. Daniel, Deena L. & Douglas N. Hambleton, Ann-Marie P. Hogan, Donna Marie LaSala, Sarah Stadler & Zach Cowan: In honor of Betty Olds, for her service as a former Berkeley Council member.
Monique Ninove: In honor of her mother Cecil Malak

IN MEMORY OF

Marian E. Hopping: In memory of Audrey Speer

IN KIND

Jason Hubbard: Flat-screen computer monitor for the Eco-Oakland & Eco-Richmond programs.
Steve White w/ Scope City: Optics and Collimation check for binoculars used for the Eco-Oakland & Eco-Richmond programs.
Marilyn Nasatir: Tripod for the Eco-Oakland & Eco-Richmond programs.

GRANTS

The Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund: Birds at Risk: Reducing Avian Fatalities at the Altamont Pass



OBSERVATIONS

BRUCE MAST

NOV 1 - 21, 2008

After the adrenaline rush of October's migration waves, November was a time to catch one's breath, welcome back the remaining winter specialties, and regroup in preparation for December's CBCs.

LOONS TO DUCKS

An immature **Yellow-billed Loon** (*Gavia adamsii*) was discovered on Nov. 8 at Spud Pt. Marina in Bodega Bay, SON. This cooperative gave numerous birders the opportunity to compare its field ID marks with nearby Common Loons through the 20th (RSc; mob). Scattered Red-necked Grebe sightings were reported from several expected locales along the coast. Less expected was 1-2 Red-necked Grebes sighted in San Francisco Bay Nov. 19-20 from the Berkeley Pier, ALA (BoB, BaB; BP, JS, BD) and near Pt. Isabel, CC (CK, TK). A Nov. 16 pelagic trip to the Cordell Bank, MRN, produced a number of highlights for seabird enthusiasts, including 1-2 Laysan Albatrosses and 8 Flesh-footed, 3-5 Short-tailed, 2 Manx, and 90 Black-vented Shearwaters (RSc; mob). The L. Merritt (ALA) hybrid Hooded Merganser x Barrow's Goldeneye returned safely from its summer sojourn to northern climes by the 18th (HP).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

An adult Harlan's Hawk (*harlani* subspecies of Red-tailed Hawk) returned to Coyote Valley, SCL, on the 4th (RP). Another Harlan's transited over Hawk Hill in the MRN Headlands, MRN, on the 16th (KW, oob). Raptor watchers reported 7-10 Ferruginous Hawks, 4-6 Rough-legged Hawks, and 3 Prairie Falcons at various raptor hot spots. A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** (*Larus fuscus*) was photographed on the 14th at Mayfield Slough, SCL (MR). In the Alcid department, the Nov. 16 pelagic trip to the Cordell Bank included on its highlights reel 2 Ancient Murrelets and 3-4 Tufted Puffins (RSt; oob).

DOVES TO THRASHERS

Birders in SCL contributed a couple unusual Sapsucker sightings, starting with a Red-



Glen Tepke

Harris's Sparrow seen in Richmond

naped Sapsucker on the 11th at Arastradero Preserve (AK, RC, GM), followed on the 15th by a juvenile male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Christmas Hill Park (BK; BR, oob). Tropical Kingbirds turned up at a couple coastal locations: 2 were reported Nov. 4 near the Half Moon Bay Airport, SM, (GD) and a 3rd individual was sighted on the 5th at the Rail Ponds in Bodega Bay, SON (VB; oob).

The juvenile Northern Shrike found on Oct. 16 at Las Gallinas Water Treatment Plant (MRN) was still present on the 20th (NMN). Several ALA Big Year participants were relieved to find 6-7 Mountain Bluebirds Nov. 9-16 along Patterson Pass Rd. after widespread frustration chasing an ephemeral flock in that area last January (BP; mob). A Townsend's Solitaire set up camp Nov. 10-14 near Almaden Res., SCL, where it showed a distinct preference

for toyon berries (AV, mob). The East Bay hosted a couple transient Sage Thrashers: first at Hayward RS, ALA, on the 2nd (JC, DH; BoB) and then at Byron Hot Springs Rd/Holey Rd, CC, on the 17th (HH, EL).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

Vagrant warbler numbers slowed to a trickle in Nov. but a hatch-year **Worm-eating Warbler** (*Helminthos vermivorus*) was banded and released on the 16th at CCFS, SCL (GB, KO; MR). Other choice warbler sightings included a Cape May Warbler on the 21st atop a willow thicket in Moss Beach, SM, (RT); a Black-throated Green Warbler Nov. 12-13 in the large oaks near the Pioneer Log Cabin in GGP, SF, (PM, JCI, BF; DM, BU); and a Hooded Warbler on the 8th in an arroyo along Wavecrest Rd. in Half Moon Bay, SM (GD). A Summer Tanager was discovered at Doran Park in Bodega Bay, SON, on the 4th (DF).

Sparrow-watchers in CC found a Vesper Sparrow along Byron Hot Springs Rd/Holey Rd on the 2nd (FO) and a hatch-year Harris's Sparrow at Pt. Isabel, starting the 16th (SD; mob). Lapland Longspurs put in 1-day appearances in SM at Pigeon Pt. on the 9th (RT) and at Mariners Pt. on the 15th (ADM). A Rusty Blackbird joined the blackbird flock at Coyote Pt. Yacht Club Nov. 15-17 (JM; RF). A photo taken on the 15th at Joseph D. Grant CP, SCL, was ID'd as a Cassin's Finch (OH). Finally, a bird listed last month as a Snow Bunting in SON was later ID'd as a leucistic House Finch.

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers; "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions.

Abbreviations for Observers: ADM, Al DeMartini; AK, Anne Kelley; AV, Ann Verdi; BaB, Barbara Brandriff; BD, Bob Dunn; BF, Brian Fitch; BK, Pat Kenny; BoB, Bob Brandriff; BP, Bob Power; BR, Bob Reiling; BU, Bob Uvvang; CK, Christine Koundakjian; DF, Dea Freid; DH, Derek Heins; DM, Dominik Mosur; EL, Eugenia Larson; ES, Emilie Strauss; FO, Frances Oliver; GB, Gina Barton; GD, Gary Deghi; GM, Ginny Marshall; HH, Hugh Harvey; HP, Hilary Powers; JC, Jim Chiropoulos; JCI, Josiah Clark; Jco, Judi Cooper; JM, Joe Morlan; JS, Jim Scarff; KO, Kris Olson; KW, Ken Wilson; MB, Mary Betlach; MR, Mike Rogers; NMN, Natalie McNear; OH, Owen Holt; PM, Peter Metropulos; RC, Rob Cullison; RF, Rich Ferrick; RP, Ryan Phillips; RSc, Rusty Scalf; RSt, Rich Stallcup; RT, Ron Thorn; SD, Sheila Dickie; TK, Ted Koundakjian; VB, Veronica Bowers

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CBC, Christmas Bird Count; CC, Contra Costa; CCFS, Coyote Creek Field Station; CP, County Park; Cr., Creek; Cyn., Canyon; DENWR, Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge; EEC, Environmental Education Center; GGP, Golden Gate Park; L., Lake; MRN, Marin; Mt., Mount; N., North; NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; OSP, Open Space Preserve; PRBO, Pt Reyes Bird Observatory; PRNS, Pt Reyes National Seashore; Pt., Point; Rd., Road; Res., Reservoir; RP, Regional Park; RS, Regional Shoreline; S., South; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SFBBO, SF Bay Bird Observatory; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve; WPCP, Water Pollution Control Plant

GOVERNOR'S AWARD from page 1

Anthony and Diane were cheered by a group of GGA supporters attending the event: Audre Newman and Michael Chinn, longtime Eco-Oakland volunteers, Juan Benjumea, third grade teacher at Oakland's International Community School who participates in Eco-Oakland, Linda Coffee, GGA development manager, and Marjorie Blackwell, GGA board vice president. The ceremony featured brief videos of each of the 21 winners. EPA Secretary Adams noted there were more than 100 nominations and that the selection of the 2008 winners—"leading innovators in protecting the environment"—was very difficult.

Eco-Oakland, which began in 1999, and Eco-Richmond, launched in 2007, provide much needed environmental education to elementary school students, offering opportunities to students and their families to explore and learn about their local wildlife habitats in classrooms and on field trips to nearby creeks, marshes, and the Pacific Ocean. A third grade teacher at Markham Elementary School in Oakland, Patricia Guardado, commented, "This program has enlarged our comprehension of

science standards for plants, animals, and ecosystems, our social studies standards of community, and of our reading unit, City Wildlife. It has made it come alive!"

—Marjorie Blackwell

ALTAMONT MEDIATION UPDATE from page 1

"on-the-ground" compliance monitoring. The companies also declined to respond to strong recommendations from the County's Scientific Review Committee (SRC) in September 2007, when the SRC found that the companies had failed to reduce bird kills at all in the prior two years. The SRC recommended immediately doubling the length of the required winter shutdown from two months to four and removing roughly 300 newly identified high-risk turbines.

Our mediation led to several successes: The companies will fund an independent, on-the-ground compliance monitor for the life of the permits; remove additional high-risk turbines before March 2009; and remove derelict and non-operational turbines on an annual basis. In accordance

with the settlement agreement, the companies must shut down operations for three winter months (November through January) in 2008-2009 and three-and-a-half months in every subsequent year.

These steps should strengthen management measures at Altamont Pass; however, Golden Gate Audubon remains concerned about the companies' failure to reduce raptor mortality significantly to date. The mediation makes no other changes to the settlement agreement, the terms of which ensure that Golden Gate Audubon will continue to have a seat at the table in the effort to reduce raptor mortality at Altamont Pass. If the companies fail to reduce raptor mortality by half by November 2009, Golden Gate Audubon will work to ensure that the required adaptive management is implemented so that the companies meet 50 percent reduction. We will also continue our role on the steering committee for the state-approved conservation plan that will govern ongoing wind-turbine operations at Altamont Pass and seek to balance bird conservation and wind energy production over the long-term.

—Elizabeth Murdock

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NEW
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